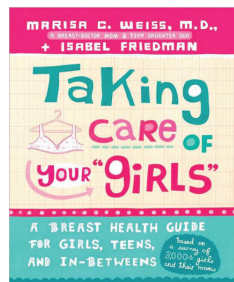


BOOKS

Taking Care of Your “Girls”: A Breast Health Guide for Girls, Teens, and In-Betweens. Marisa C. Weiss and Isabel Friedman. New York: Three Rivers Press, 2008, 256 pages, paperback, \$15.95.



Taking Care of Your “Girls”: A Breast Health Guide for Girls, Teens, and In-Betweens is written for young women as an educational tool to guide them

throughout the changes they experience as their breasts develop. Based on results of a survey of more than 3,000 girls in grades 6–12, the authors’ respond to questions and concerns on topics ranging from what is normal to issues surrounding self-esteem.

Each chapter begins with statements or questions from the girls themselves that deal with a theme, which the authors then discuss. The statements show that the young women who participated in the survey are bright, thoughtful, and seeking straightforward information. Weiss (the founder of BreastCancer.org) and her daughter, Friedman, do an exceptional job at addressing the girls’ concerns.

This book has several major strengths. The text is well written, easy to understand, and empowering to young women. The book is divided into two parts. The first part focuses on breast development, including normal breast changes, benign conditions seen in young women, breast self-examination instruction, and tests that may be performed to evaluate a finding. The second part focuses on issues surrounding self image and dispels misconceptions regarding breast cancer. A particularly well written chapter in part 2 discusses how to find the right bra for each body type. The book does not have to be read from front to back; readers can focus on a specific chapter and read others later. The bulleted items address concerns young women have in attempting to discuss sensitive issues with their parents. The chapters “Self-image and Teasing,” “Show off, Cover Up, or Glide By,” and “When You Want

Your Breast Size to Be Different” provide honest and accurate information with practical advice to allow the individual to make an informed decision. In addition, the book addresses common myths surrounding breast cancer development (e.g., tight bras, antiperspirants) and provides the reader with accurate information on risk factors. The final chapter, “Think Pink, Live Green,” stresses that limited information is available regarding the environment and the link to developing breast cancer. However, healthy lifestyle choices are encouraged.

Consistent with the author’s intentions, the book provides sound medical information on breast health and cancer with candid information on embracing the changes experienced during adolescence. The book ends by providing readers with specific resources that address overall health and wellness, positive body image, environmental issues, and information on breast health and breast cancer. *Taking Care of Your “Girls”* is a valuable resource to encourage a dialogue between the generations regarding breast health for oncology nurses working with various age groups in the community as well as individuals who have or are at increased risk for breast cancer.

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Tales From the Pager Chronicles. Patrice Rancour. Indianapolis, IN: Sigma Theta Tau International, 2008, 232 pages, paperback, \$19.95.



Tales From the Pager Chronicles is a realistic portrayal of the harried and challenging role of a nurse who puts her heart on the line on a regular basis. Whether every day is this crazy in Rancour’s position

or the book just covers a particularly busy nonstop shift is unclear, but the message is obvious: To be a fully engaged nurse who truly cares for patients is exhausting business. As each of Rancour’s scenarios ends, her pager goes off and she rushes to her next patient. The use of the pager provides a great transition from story to

story but also gives a sense of how busy a working nurse’s day can be.

Rancour gives readers a peek into the angst-ridden experiences of patients and families facing end-of-life issues and the importance of nurses in guiding them at this difficult time. In the first story, “Blythe Spirit in the Medical Intensive Care Unit,” Rancour’s pager goes off immediately when she turns it on. She is called to the bedside of a woman who just died after months of problems following bone marrow transplantation and nearly three years since her cancer diagnosis. Her husband now is trying to deal with the realization that their long journey together is ending.

The core of what Rancour does involves “presence”—the ability to just “be there” with someone and let them talk (or not talk), allowing them to be comforted by her nonjudgmental patience. In the first story, Rancour reflects on how important being a “fighter” was to this woman and her husband. Readers witness her comforting words as well as her personal thoughts as she helps the husband face the loss of the most important person in his life. At the end of her visit, the man asks her, “How do you do this all day long, day after day?” This question may cross readers’ minds as Rancour’s day progresses.

Another story, “An Old Wound Still Festering,” illustrates the importance of Rancour’s presence to the staff at her hospital. A troubled young nurse asks Rancour to help her understand a patient’s behavior, only to discover that her self-doubts and anxiety stem from her own unresolved grief related to her mother’s death from breast cancer. The young nurse wanted to have “closure” with her mother, who had wanted to die on her own terms without dwelling “on the negative.” Rancour helps the new nurse start to face her regrets related to her mother’s death and see how the realization can affect her relationships with her patients.

Rancour is an advanced practice nurse who specializes in psychiatry and end-of-life issues, so she is trained, equipped, and willing to jump headlong into difficult situations. However, most healthcare providers are not. Training is improving with the continued push to increase education about palliative care. Nurses are skilled patient advocates, educators, and champions when they feel knowledgeable and empowered to stand up for something important. Unfortunately, too many still